

CURIOUS BACKGROUNDS

Prince(ss), Seeker, Tinker and Visionary

This pamphlet includes:
personality traits, ideals, bonds, flaws and
features for four new backgrounds, including
additional optional features which change how a
character is played for
Dungeons and Dragons 5th Edition

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ADDITIONAL RULES

Optional Features.

If your Dungeon Master allows them, when a background contains an “Optional Feature,” you can gain this feature in addition to the original feature. It is not a “variant feature,” but your DM does have ultimate authority over whether they might allow them in their game.

Example.

A wizard takes the “Princess” background, and elects to take the “Force of Personality” feature. She would replace Intelligence with Charisma in the text for the wizard’s *Spellcasting* feature (affecting attack modifiers and save DCs for spells) as well as all other features such as Arcane Tradition.

PRINCE(SS)

You belong to the highest of families among the Nobility. It is a life of parties, performances and magic high above the earthly troubles of the world. You have been tutored by the wisest of mages and the most beautiful of artists to hone your own skills of courtship, magic and the ruling of a nation.

But such a life can be boring, and those of the nobility who wish to experience the world can only truly do so disguised.

What do you want out of your adventure? Do you think you are ready to live life without servant or shelter from the worst of the world? How well do you think you can adapt to being an adventurer?

Skills. Arcana, Performance

Tools: Disguise Kit

Languages: You can read, write and speak one additional language of your choice.

Equipment: A set of high quality Traveler's Clothes, a royal pendant, a Disguise kit and a purse containing 20gp.

Feature (Diamond among the Rough): Choose an alter ego. This person may not be someone that already exists. You have all the required paperwork involved in being of your alter ego's station, and have advantage on any checks involved in playing that person. Disguising yourself as your alter ego takes half the time necessary.

Should another creature discover your true identity they will treat you appropriately for someone of your station, but it is up to the DM (or player if it is a PC) to determine the ramification of this knowledge.

Optional Feature (Force of Personality): You have been told all your life that you can be whatever you wish to be, allowing your innate magical ability to fill in the gaps of knowledge. You may replace either Wisdom or Intelligence with Charisma for all features of a spellcasting class of your choice.

Suggested Characteristics

As a member of high nobility, your personality traits might reflect a very trained, but naive demeanor. You might have an unexplained grace or authority in your steps that you cannot hide. Bonds might involve family, tutors or secret friends who got the idea of adventuring in your head in the first place. Flaws should reflect a sheltered life and misinformation about the world around them.



d8 Personality Traits

- 1 I speak eloquently and correctly, and encourage others to do the same.
- 2 I am graceful in my movements and ways, almost as if performing a dance with every step.
- 3 No matter how I try and hide it, my voice commands respect.
- 4 I am very uncertain about the world and often appear timid until I know more about it.
- 5 I yearn for adventure, and will not be stopped from experiencing all that life has to offer before I am returned to my cage.
- 6 I still enjoy a good party, and will drop everything to join in the fun.
- 7 Animals must be able to sense my nobility. The flock to me and we sing the songs of the world together.
- 8 I prize the most handsome of clothes, but know better than to wear them in my new life.

d6 Ideal

- 1 **Equality.** I believe that in their hearts, everyone is the same. They just wear different hats. (Good)
- 2 **Respect.** Even in secrecy, I demand respect be given to me and to those around me. (Lawful)
- 3 **Freedom.** People should be allowed to do as they wish, regardless of station. (Chaotic)
- 4 **Servitude.** In time, everyone will live to serve me. For now, I gauge how best to use them. (Evil)
- 5 **Independence.** I do not wish for any obligation to be thrown at me. I simply wish to live. (Neutral)
- 6 **Rule.** I will one day rule the lands. I hope to learn all I can about them before then. (Any)

d6 Bond

- 1 I greatly respect my parents, not because of their birth right but because of their accomplishments. I hope to someday meet, and then surpass, their expectations of me.
- 2 It is my tutors I have to thank for instilling a wanderlust in my heart, and I wish to continue to learn in their memory.
- 3 It was a poor merchant's child who first showed my life beyond the castle walls, and who taught me the thrill of adventure.
- 4 My older sibling got to ride off to war while I was young, and I still envy them that opportunity.
- 5 I was kidnapped as a child, and while a terrifying experience thank those responsible for showing me the world is far bigger than my own inside the castle.
- 6 I've had a fascination with the tales heroes all my life, and wish that I can one day be as great as them.

d6 Flaw

- 1 I am prone to revealing my position when I do not get my way.
- 2 I prefer not to touch things, especially if they might be dirty.
- 3 I refuse to do any hard labor, and will trick or pay others to work in my place.
- 4 I will one day rule these lands. Everyone is below me.
- 5 I still enjoy a good party, and will drop everything to join in the fun. Perhaps a little too much.
- 6 I believe in excess and will spend my coin on extra food, drink and clothing.

SEEKER

You are a seeker of lost knowledge, traveling across the lands in search of some forgotten relic that haunts your dreams. Whether this be the exploration of ancient ruins or in thorough study in every library, your every waking thought is to find this object.

What are you looking for? Why? If you come from somewhere else, where is that place? Why is this object so important to you?

Skills: History, Investigation

Tools: Thieves' Tools or Musical Instrument

Language: You can read, write and speak one additional language of your choice.

Equipment: Traveler's clothes, thieves' tools or a musical instrument, a small book full of notes, and a pouch containing 10gp

Feature (Focused): Choose a single, particular object. You have advantage on any Intelligence checks in regards to that particular object (such as historical lore or magical properties) or people and places it has influenced (such as who may have the object now or where it is supposedly housed) as long as it is not in your possession. Should you then obtain that object, you can spend a week of thorough study and dreaming on another object to gain this feature again for that new object.

Optional Feature (Classically Trained): Pick a spellcasting class; you can replace Charisma with Intelligence or Wisdom (pick one, this choice is permanent) for all class features of that class.

Suggested Characteristics

Seekers switch between moods of intense focus to absolute absentmindedness. Some would consider them unhinged, and they wouldn't be terribly incorrect. Things that bond the Seeker to the world might be the very object they seek, or the person or writing that set them on the path. Flaws could be that of anyone, but often center on the object of their obsession and how they view its importance.



d8 Personality Traits

- 1 I often daydream, thinking about that singular object.
- 2 I am as straight forward and focused as an arrow. And sometimes an arrow misses its mark. That's part of the fun.
- 3 I love the smell of dusty tomes. They smell like an age forgotten.
- 4 I like to sound mysterious. My obsession doesn't make sense to me, why should it to anyone else?
- 5 I am all about the journey. If my feet aren't on the road I feel as if I'm losing time.
- 6 In truth, I am afraid of ever finding the object. What purpose will my life have then?
- 7 Alongside my obsession, I also have a fascination with shoes. I wear only the finest of leathers with the most intricate of stitching.
- 8 I enjoy having a purpose in life, and do not envy those who wander through life aimlessly.

d6 Ideal

- 1 **Peacebringer.** I hope that the journey leads me to something that will allow me to make the world a better place. (Good)
- 2 **Kingmaker.** Perhaps the object is an ancestral memory, and by finding it I will discover my birthright. (Lawful)
- 3 **Wanderlust.** I don't much care about finding the thing I'm searching for. It is but a vehicle for adventure. (Chaotic)
- 4 **Strength.** The object I seek is one of great power. I must command it. (Evil)
- 5 **Change.** My journey will change the world. For better or worse, I know I must be there. (Neutral)
- 6 **Obsession.** I will seek my obsession to the very ends of the earth, or until the end of time. (Any)

d6 Bond

- 1 Journeying alone is rough, and I'm glad to have found companions willing to share the road with me.
- 2 I never knew my parents, and hope that whatever I'm looking for helps me discover who they were.
- 3 It was my mentor who set me out on their failed quest. I don't know why it was so important to them, but now I can't stop thinking about it.
- 4 I once had a friend with the same purpose as I. But their research led them elsewhere and I wonder if I will ever see them again.
- 5 There was another with the same dreams, but they plan on using the object for some nefarious scheme. I must find it before them.
- 6 I find a personal connection with the person who originally held the relic of my dreams. I wonder sometimes if I am that person.

d6 Flaw

- 1 I will do whatever it takes to find my obsession.
- 2 Alcohol seems to be the only thing to let me sleep soundly.
- 3 I often feel used, like a pawn in some greater scheme.
- 4 I know of my importance to the realm, and like others to know as well.
- 5 I do not pay attention to things that don't concern me or my quest. It would just be using otherwise precious space in my head.
- 6 I am incredibly secretive about my obsession. Others might think me mad, or wish to steal it.

TINKER

While not as commonplace as magic users who defy physics, some think to use the natural properties of the world to create incredible machines and devices that improve the simple lives of those around them. Tinkers either work on these machines or live to make their own mark upon the world of burgeoning science.

How did you come into this profession? Why become an adventurer? What do you hope to build some day? What are your family's thoughts on your path in life?

Skills: (Arcana or Nature), Investigation

Tools: Choose either two Artisan's Tools, or one Artisan's Tools and Thieves' Tools

Equipment: A set of Artisan's Tools (your choice), a leather apron, a Tinker's Bag (see below) and a pouch containing 10gp.

Feature (Crafty): Given the opportunity and the time to thoroughly examine and deconstruct a device, you can replicate its construction assuming you have all the materials required. The time and price is up to your DM, but these periods of time need not be consecutively and may be done during any short rests (tinkers find deconstruction of mechanisms relaxing).

Optional Feature (Inventor): Through the creation of various quasi-magical or alchemical objects, you are basically a spellcaster! Pick a spellcasting class; you use Intelligence in place of Wisdom or Charisma for features of that class. All your spells require material components, which can be cast with a Tinker's Bag (full of mechanical odds and ends like copper wire and small cogs weighing about 5 lbs), using costly components as normal.

Suggested Characteristics

More often than not, Tinkers are highly intelligent and enthusiastic people. They highly value learning and self discovery and enjoy the company of people to whom they can learn from, or argue. Teachers and other students of the craft are important to the Tinker, whether friend or rival, as the path of science cannot be embarked on alone. Consider flaws that deal with being misunderstood, ambitious and self defeating.



d8 Personality Traits

- 1 I am incredibly fidgety, and am only calm when I have something in my hands to work on.
- 2 When I look at something, I tend to stare at it for a long time trying to figure out how it works.
- 3 My favorite sound is the soft clicking of gears.
- 4 I like to be precise with my words, choosing specific language over incongruous poetics.
- 5 I know I'm the best, I just have to think of a way to prove it.
- 6 I often come up with my best ideas while puffing at my pipe.
- 7 A problem is just something I haven't figured out yet. Give me a moment, I'll get it.
- 8 The world is just an amazing and fascinating place! There are parts that are less great, but as a whole its pretty swell. I hope one day to see it all.

d6 Ideal

- 1 **Industrious.** My inventions will help the common folk, making their lives easier. (Good)
- 2 **Empiricist.** The best way to understand something is to test it, and then observe. Through this method, only then can we comprehend the universe. (Lawful)
- 3 **Proof.** I will prove that science has its place among the greatest of thinkers, and that magic is a bunch of hogwash. (Chaotic)
- 4 **Merchant.** I don't mind what my inventions are used for, as long as I profit from it. (Evil)
- 5 **Salesman.** I wish to sell my inventions to everyone, assuming they can pay the price. I'll be rich! (Neutral)
- 6 **Scientist.** Nothing is impossible. You just need the right idea to jump start it. (Any)

d6 Bond

- 1 Its my inventions that define who I am. They must be the very best.
- 2 My studies began after coming across an interesting old book with schematics. I hope one day to meet the author.
- 3 I want to hear my name called out at every market corner in every city. Only then will I know I succeeded.
- 4 Some villain had stolen my invention, and claimed the reputation that should have been mine.
- 5 My mentor was always misunderstood, and I hope to teach the world in his name the true teachings of science.
- 6 The principles of science are very dear to me, and I dislike the kinds of magicians who would destroy them.

d6 Flaw

- 1 I must document interesting phenomena. My craft demands it!
- 2 I am much more studious than gregarious, and don't ever think people will hear my name.
- 3 People are not worth my time. You can always trust a machine to do its job.
- 4 When my inventions do not work properly, I become furious or driven to drink.
- 5 I have a tendency to forget things I know I just had. "Where are my spectacles?" "They're on your head."
- 6 I speak in a cacophony of highly intelligible techno-babble, uncaring if you understand it or not. I will not repeat myself either!

VISIONARY

Whether you were part of busy city church or lonely mountain monastery, you once followed the rites of your faith. You know the songs of worship and understand the strictures more than any other citizen.

During one of your meditations, you had a vision explaining something to happen in the future.

What was this vision? Is it why you began your journey, or was it an excuse to do so? Do your betters believe you, or simply wish you out of their hair?

Skills: Religion, Insight

Tools: Herbalism Kit

Language: You can read, write and speak one additional language of your choice.

Equipment: Common clothes, a holy symbol, a pilgrim's cloak, an Herbalism Kit and a pouch with 10gp.

Feature (Vision): You have a vague understanding of some universal truth. Tell your DM some question about the world that you would like to know. If the DM agrees, they will feed you information about that question as relevant pieces of information appear within the story.

Optional Feature (Understand): The unique teachings of your church tell to “not know, but understand.” You have accepted these beliefs. Pick a spellcasting class; you use Wisdom in place of Intelligence or Charisma for features of that class.

Suggested Characteristics

Visionaries are not necessarily monks or clerics. They can just as easily be farmers or merchants. Where they all meet are a fervent belief in their faith. Your traits and bonds should reflect your relationship with your faith and your patron deity. Flaws might reflect misunderstandings in your teachings, or problems your faith gives you when interacting with others.



d8 Personality Traits

- 1 I am calm and reserved, preferring quiet meditation over lively chanting.
- 2 There is beauty and meaning in everything, and I hope to point that out to those around me.
- 3 I do not easily get upset. That does not mean I am a pacifist, however.
- 4 I prefer to use the words of great people in place of my own.
- 5 I am a paragon of my deity and believe in them unerringly.
- 6 I love bees. They are incredibly industrious and always do their job. I wish we were more like them.
- 7 I prefer simple solutions to every problem, and try not to think too long on anything.
- 8 My first instinct is to help. The best way to prove your faith is through action.

d6 Ideal

- 1 **Savior.** Through my trials, my vision promises to improve the world. (Good)
- 2 **Servant.** I follow the scriptures of my faith. I believe in them, and that they are the correct path to improving the self, and the world. (Lawful)
- 3 **Heretic.** The people of my faith find my visions heretical, but I will prove to them the power of my faith. (Chaotic)
- 4 **Crusader.** I give no quarter to the enemies of my faith. They deserve not my kind words. They deserve retribution. (Evil)
- 5 **Convert.** I had never been the most faithful disciple, and find this whole “vision” thing unsettling. I must see it through, whatever it might have in store for me. (Neutral)
- 6 **Pilgrim.** I know nothing but my faith. I journey to learn about the world, and hope to have the pieces of my vision fall into place. (Any)

d6 Bond

- 1 The church is all I've ever known. They are my family, and it saddens me to have to leave them.
- 2 I have a personal connection with my deity. I was chosen by them, and I am their loyal servant.
- 3 The head of my church did not believe me, and I journey to prove to them wrong.
- 4 I have no connection with anyone or anything. They would simply distract me from my purpose.
- 5 My traveling companions may not believe me or my faith, but I am glad to have them and teach them the ways of my deity.
- 6 I have a small object let by my parents. It is the only thing I have to remember them by, and hope that one day leads me to them.

d6 Flaw

- 1 I must encourage everyone to follow my path, as it is the only path to salvation.
- 2 Because I have seen the future, I know that I am in it. I take risks I probably otherwise wouldn't.
- 3 I find my visions easiest after I have indulged in the world's pleasures.
- 4 I like to give my deity credit for everything, regardless of their involvement or interest.
- 5 I was taught that violence was never the answer. I have proven that incorrect more than once.
- 6 I have no time for the faithless. Do they not understand the importance of keeping ourselves in the gods' favor?